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*Egypt's Middle Way***The Arabs and the World: Nasser's Arab Nationalist Policy**

By Charles D. Cremeans.

Frederick Praeger, New York. London: Pall Mall Press. 351 pages. 42s.

THIS American book makes a brave attempt to decide whether President Nasser, as he makes his way between East and West, is ricocheting from one side to the other as events and opportunism dictate, or whether he is keeping as close as a small power is able to a middle course that he thought out for himself. Mr. Cremeans, having plumped, on balance, for the second view, tries to define what American policy towards him should be.

For several reasons he has to reach his verdict by a long route, and over obstacles. As a matter of history, he has to dispose of the fact that a succession of western statesmen failed to see that Egyptian neutralism was a logical and tenable doctrine, and that Egyptian socialism was not communism. He then has to account for President Nasser's mistakes in Asia and Africa—often the result of an Egyptian's mistaken belief that other nations are as biddable as his own. Lastly, he has to show the president coping with the dilemmas that confront him whenever his plans for Egypt fail to dovetail with Arab unity. To bring President Nasser through this jungle and to produce at the exit a man with a doctrine is something of a feat. It is a feat achieved only by the skin of Mr. Cremeans's teeth, but that is less his fault than that of the tangle Arabs get into when they do battle with unity in their hearts and rivalry in their minds.

Mr. Cremeans is well qualified for his uphill task. He taught for years in Upper Egypt and has seen the country from within and below, as well as from the American Embassy in Cairo. He was given leisure to think out his conclusions by the Council on Foreign Relations, which awarded him a research fellowship and brought a study group of some first-class Middle Eastern experts to bear on his thinking. Perhaps this procedure caused him to weigh too

many ideas. He is inclined to insert them all, and so to be readable only by those already familiar with his confusing subject.

But his conclusion is clear, and he spells it out plain. It is that the Middle East is in for years of uncomfortable growing pains because, though all who speak Arabic feel united, they are in fact divided by differences of temperament, wealth and social pattern that are not easily lived down. Jealousies and crises of confidence ensue. The scene President Nasser dominates, but does not control. The United States can best matters to its advantage only by trying to grow better at seeing his point of view; by being content to see him neutral, and socialist; by counting it a success if he does not pass into the communist camp; by refraining from hustling him; by sticking around with a cheque book and the Sixth Fleet on call until the day he asks for them. Maybe none of this is very new, but how different American (and British) fortunes might have been if either Eden or Dulles had thought these thoughts in 1954-55. Mr. Cremeans is now a consultant on Middle Eastern affairs to the United States government. It has hired a level-headed and well-informed servant.

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